1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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despair of escape, inspires the naturally fearful with courage, which a Lacedemonian would admire, and which Europe desires to see in her warriors.

Moreover, being lovers of liberty and roving, they choose to own no law, and bind themselves to their cacique by no oaths of fidelity. Without leave asked on their part, or displeasure evinced on his, they remove with their families whithersoever it suits them, and join some other cacique; and when tired of the second, return with impunity to the horde of the first. This is quite common, and a matter of surprize to no one that knows how fleeting is the faith, how mutable the will of the Indians. Should a report be spread by uncertain or suspicious authors, that the enemy are coming in a few days, it is enough. Numbers, dreading the loss of life more than of fame, will desert their cacique, and hasten with their families to some well-known retreats. Lest however they should be branded with the name of deserters and cowards, they say they are going out to hunt. Hence, whenever we priests had to defend the new colonies filled with savage assailants, and almost destitute of inhabitants to repel them, we generally made more use of craft and threats than of force. The danger, or the fear of it, being dissipated, these fugacious heroes at length came home, no

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621 722 157 one daring to accuse them of cowardice, though no one could be ignorant that fear prompted their departure, security their return.

622 721 [273] Whenever a cacique determines upon undertaking an excursion, a public drinking-party is appointed. Heated with that luscious beverage, prepared from honey or the alfaroba, they zealously offer their services to the cacique, who invites them to war, sing triumph before the victory with festive vociferations, and, (who would believe it?) diligently execute when sober, what they promised in a state of intoxication. That love is kindled by love, as fire by fire, and that friends are gained by liberality, are trite proverbs in Europe, and have been experienced by us in our long commerce with the Abipones. A cacique who seldom gives a repulse will have numerous, obedient, and affectionate hordesmen. Kind words or looks, the marks of good-will, avail but little amongst the savages, unless accompanied with beneficence. They require at the cacique's hands whatever they take it into their heads to wish for, believing that his office obliges him to satisfy the petitions of all. If he denies them anything, they say he is not a captain, or noble, and insolently bestow upon him the disgraceful appellation of wood-Indian—*Acumi Lanaŕaik*. The cacique has nothing, either in his arms or his

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CHAPTER XV.

OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ABIPONES.

157 THE Abipones, in their whole deportment, preserve a decorum scarce credible to Europeans. Their countenance and gait display a modest cheerfulness, and manly gravity tempered with gentleness and kindness. Nothing licentious, indecent, or uncourteous, is discoverable in their actions. In their daily meetings, all is quiet and orderly. Confused vociferations, quarrels, or sharp words, have no place there. [522] They love jokes in conversation, but are averse [578] to indecency and ill-nature. If any dispute arises, each declares his opinion with a calm countenance and unruffled speech: they never break out into clamours, threats, and reproaches, as is usual to certain people of Europe. These [273] praises are justly due to the Abipones as long as they remain sober: but when intoxicated, they shake off the bridle of reason, become distracted, and quite unlike themselves. In their 576 assemblies, they maintain the utmost politeness. 623 One scarcely dares to interrupt another, when he is speaking. Whilst one man relates some

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ing-parties, and is sometimes carried on for many hours with much vociferation of the combatants, and no less effusion of blood.

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Intoxication affects the Abipones in various ways. Some laugh violently, merrier than hilarity itself; others seem oppressed with melancholy; others, inflated with the remembrance of their mighty deeds, grow more threatening and boastful than the Thraso of Terence, or the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus. I knew a man, who, whenever he was drunk, threatened to kill his little son, and as he lay stretched upon the ground, spoke in such loud and angry tones to his wife, that he was heard throughout the whole neighbourhood. There was one man, who, when he was drunk, always requested to be baptized, continually exclaiming, "Make haste, Father, and wash my head!" though, when sober, he never thought anything about baptism. An Abipon, of no reputation amongst his countrymen, entered our house furnished with a bow and arrows, and demanded of me, in a threatening tone, whether I did not think him a captain, that is, a man distinguished for great actions; alarmed at the fierce countenance of the interrogator, and at the bundle of arrows which he bore, I made him a fine panegyric by way of reply, though he was a man universally

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despised for his cowardice. An old man in the town of St. Ferdinand, inglorious alike in birth and actions, on being called by his drinking associates, *Lanañaik*, plebeian, vainly endeavoured with arms, and absurd clamours, to avenge the insult; for his wife, a sturdy old woman, always watched over her infuriated husband, that he might not fall by the fists or weapons of his companions. On this occasion she caught hold of him by the legs, or girdle, dragged him through the street, and when got home, vainly exhorted him to sleep and silence; for he, ever recurring to the flouts of his comrades, could take no rest, constantly ejaculating with a hoarse voice, *Tà yeegam! Aym Lanañaik? Tà yeegam! Là rihè lahè!* "What! I a plebeian? I ignoble? I demand vengeance." Enraged by these reflections, he endeavours again and again to raise himself on his feet, and snatch up a spear, when his angry wife as often knocks him down upon the floor. This sport continued for many hours, to the incredible annoyance of all that dwelt in the neighbourhood. Few could repress indignation, none laughter. Almost all the women have the same task when they labour to disarm their husbands, and take them out of the hands of their drunken comrades. The whole Abiponian nation would come to destruction, if the women and youths attended